A Thank You

This is a great honor and a great pleasure to see so many friends and colleagues assembled here. I want to thank all those who made this possible. Altogether, as I look back on my professional life, I am struck by how lucky I was to find a niche at NIST, the opportunity to be involved with a wide range of research and applications within an atmosphere of collegial support and interaction. I love this place and I am proud to have been part of it. In particular, I want to thank Alan Goldman, the founder of the Operations Research Section/Division at NIST, who grew it into a center of excellence, and who nursed my professional and scientific development.

I also want to remember Burt Colvin, for whom I worked at the Boeing Scientific Research Laboratories, who later joined NIST as head of its Center for Applied Mathematics, and whose strong guidance was essential during challenging and difficult times.

During a couple of decades I had the privilege of collaborating with the Togographic Engineering Center (TEC) of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Some of my fondest memories rest with this center of excellence and dedication to the challenges posed by the suddenly rapid acquisition of voluminous topographic and geodetic data. My colleagues and I were given the opportunity to participate in the development and application of the powerful analysis tools based on triangulated irregular networks (TIN), – work I was subsequently able to pursue under the auspices of the Construction Automation Group of the Building and Fire Research Laboratory (BFRL) at NIST, helping to explore the promise and challenge inherent in the explosive growth of LADAR (**LA**ser **D**irection **A**nd **R**anging) technology. This work is also the starting point for my subsequent lecture. Following the lead of David Gilsinn it points, however, into a new direction.

A final special thanks to David Gilsinn, who shouldered the labor of love of organizing this symposium, and to all the friends and colleagues who are honoring me by their participation. It will never be forgotten.

Christoph Witzgall